

From: [Gray, David](#)
To: [Coleman, Sam](#); [Edlund, Carl](#)
Cc: [Meyer, John](#)
Subject: San Jacinto Summary
Date: Thursday, October 12, 2017 8:43:00 AM
Attachments: [Letter to EPA Administrator Pruitt Regarding San Jacinto River Waste Pit....pdf](#)
[SJRWP - 70900 ng/kg TEQ - PRP Sediment Sample Results 9-26-2017.pdf](#)
[Figure 1 v01.pdf](#)
[Figure 3 Area Mapv01.pdf](#)
[DRAFT FINAL EPA DIVE 9-22-17 sg ah.docx](#)
[Tables 1, 2, 3.pdf](#)
[20170929103604881.pdf](#)

Sam –

Here is a copy of Congressman Green's letter regarding San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund Site.

I have included a copy of the draft Dive Team Report, site maps, sample location table and preliminary data page for the high reading. We received the final data report and I understand the Houston Lab is reviewing it. There are a lot of QA/QC flags on the high data because (as I understand it) it overwhelmed the laboratory instrumentation.

On 9/28 we announced damage to the cap (statement below), directed the PRPs to collect samples (letter attached) (repairs were already done), and 10/4 updated committee staff on a conference call.

10/11 we announced the remedy selection for the site.

9/28

EPA Statement – San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site Data

DALLAS – EPA is directing the potentially responsible parties of the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site in Texas to take immediate action to address damage to the protective cap and high-levels of underlying waste material found at one of the samples on site. EPA received preliminary data from sediment samples collected by EPA's dive team from fourteen areas at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site.

Samples from one of the fourteen areas confirmed the protective cap had been damaged and the underlying waste material was exposed. The sample showed dioxins at 70,000 ng/kg. EPA recommend clean up level for the site is 30 ng/kg.

EPA has directed both International Paper and Industrial Maintenance Corporation, the potentially responsible parties (PRPs) for the San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund site in Harris County, to conduct supplemental sampling to ensure that the exposed waste material is isolated. The dioxin in the waste material does not dissolve easily in water but it can migrate further out into the surrounding sediments. The supplemental sampling will determine the extent, if any, of this migration.

Initial repairs have already been taken at the damaged area where the protective rock was missing. If

necessary, EPA will direct additional visual dive operations to check for displacement in the stone cover of the protective cap and more fully evaluate the cap for damage by Hurricane Harvey.

The PRPs developed an Operations, Monitoring, and Maintenance Plan under Federal Order by the EPA and completed work to prevent wastes from continuing to migrate to adjacent areas including the San Jacinto River in July 2011. The Order allows the Agency to require additional measures and investigations deemed necessary by the Agency from its periodic inspection of the protective cap. EPA is exercising that authority today. EPA divers determined that additional measures were necessary.

The PRP conducted similar repairs in December 2015. EPA proposed long-term remedy for the site has 150,000 cubic yards of waste removed and disposed of offsite.

EPA will continue to provide updates about the status of the Superfund site, and continue to work with the PRPs to ensure that risk to human health and the environment is managed as best as possible.

Carolyn Levine and I had a House Energy and Commerce staff update conference call on 10/4.

Here is the latest for the site from our 10/6 update.

The San Jacinto River Waste Pits site requires additional follow up. EPA received preliminary data from sediment samples collected by EPA's dive team from fourteen areas at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site. Samples from one of the fourteen areas confirmed the protective cap had been damaged and the underlying waste material was exposed. The sample showed dioxins above 70,000 ng/kg. EPA recommended clean up level for the site is 30 ng/kg. Repairs to add armored rock to the cap was completed shortly after the sampling was conducted. All repairs are complete. EPA has directed the potentially responsible parties to collect an additional 7 samples near the damaged area and sampling should be completed this week. Sample results will be available in about 2 weeks.

[EPA press release](#), [Photo: Dive teams assessing San Jacinto Waste Pits cap](#), [San Jacinto Waste Pits Areas of Interest Map](#).

Timeline/Status of Site work

Sept 28 – EPA received preliminary** dioxin data from the 14 locations sampled by the EPA Dive team in the northwest portion of the cap that is submerged.

Sept 28 – EPA directed the PRPs to prepare a sampling plan to collect additional sediment samples

Sept 29 – PRPs submit a Sampling Plan for the additional sediment samples (7 additional locations)

Sept 30 – EPA approves the Sampling Plan

Oct 2 – The PRPs initiate sampling. Expect sample results mid-October.

Site Security

Damaged fencing has been replaced.

San Jacinto PRPs will be on-site replacing the security cameras today and tomorrow. Site cameras were damaged beyond repair.

Buoys – temporary buoys are in place to mark the extent of the cap for river traffic. Permanent buoys are being placed this week.

Survey of surrounding river bottom

A bathymetric survey was conducted by the PRPs on the river bottom outside the cap perimeter to evaluate changes in the river bottom. EPA has not received the survey results, but based on communication with PRPs we expect that another scour is present outside the cap perimeter that will require repair. EPA has requested a repair plan to address any changes in river bottom elevation that would have long-term impacts to the cap stability.

**Final Data Package

EPA received the final validated data package for the 14 sediment sample locations on Oct 3. The validation memo notes problems with analysis of the samples that contained high levels of dioxin. The lab had experienced analytical issues because of the high amounts of dioxin in the sample and had to dilute the sample in order to comply with the EPA dioxin method. EPA's Houston Lab chemist are evaluating the data package to ensure analyzing lab followed the specified procedures.

10/11 Press Release

San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund Site Cleanup Plan Approved

Contact: r6press@epa.gov

DALLAS - (Oct. 11, 2017) The cleanup plan to address highly toxic dioxin contamination at the San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund site in Harris County, Texas has been approved. The selected remedy will protect human health and the environment by removing highly contaminated material from the site and securing less contaminated areas. The plan provides certainty to people living near the site by permanently addressing risk posed by the contamination. It also provides certainty to other economic interests including the businesses that rely on the San Jacinto River for navigation and the Interstate-10 transportation corridor.

"Today, we are announcing our decision to ensure the San Jacinto site is cleaned up for the benefit of the entire community," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. "As exemplified today, EPA is prioritizing Superfund clean-up by making decisions in a decisive, timely manner. The San Jacinto Waste Pits site was added to the National Priority List nearly a decade ago, and I am pleased to announce a decision has been made to permanently address the highly toxic materials to ensure health and safety in the surrounding communities."

EPA's cleanup plan includes installing engineering controls such as cofferdams

before excavating almost 212,000 cubic yards of dioxin contaminated material for disposal. A small amount of material will stay on the site where controls will prevent access, eliminate off-site migration and monitor the natural recovery into the future. The estimated cost for the remedy is \$115 million and is cost-effective; representing a reasonable value for the cost incurred.

EPA's final cleanup plan, called a Record of Decision, addresses comments on the proposed plan concerning the risk of water spreading dioxin contamination downstream by installing controls such as cofferdams to allow for dry excavation of the waste material. Changes in the construction method will effectively eliminate any potential for spreading contamination to downstream areas. The \$97 million proposed plan outlined wet excavation of material.

The Superfund site consists of two sets of impoundments, or pits, built in the mid-1960s for disposing solid and liquid pulp and paper mill wastes that are contaminated with polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins (dioxins) and polychlorinated dibenzofurans (furans). In 2011, the impoundments were covered with an armored cap as a temporary way to contain the contaminants.

EPA's decision, fully explained in the Record of Decision, is based on extensive studies of the contamination, human health risks, and environmental risks of this site. The final cleanup plan considers the ever-changing San Jacinto River, which encroaches on the site, and protecting important downstream resources including the Galveston Bay estuary.

EPA's selected remedy will permanently address the highly toxic dioxin waste materials, meets the federal regulatory requirements of the National Contingency Plan for cleanup of hazardous sites, and is protective of public health and the environment. EPA will release an Administrative Record, which consists of all documents used to support its selected remedy.

EPA added the San Jacinto Waste Pits site to the National Priorities List of Superfund sites in 2008, after testing revealed contamination from dioxins and furans near the waste pits. The northern set of impoundments, about 14 acres in size, is located on the western bank of the San Jacinto River, north of the Interstate-10 bridge over the San Jacinto River. These northern impoundments are partially submerged in the river. The southern impoundment, less than 20 acres in size, is located on a small peninsula that extends south of the Interstate-10 bridge. EPA is the lead agency for addressing the site and cleaning up the contamination, with support from several state partners and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Administrative Record, including the Record of Decision, for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site is available online at:

<https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwps> and at the following locations:

Stratford Branch Library
509 Stratford Street
Highlands, Texas 77562

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, TX 75202
(214) 665-6427